



A Man of Learning

January 14, 2026

Facts mattered to the man who told us “facts don’t matter.”

Ideas, principles, arguments—these mattered, too.

Which is probably what I will remember most about Scott Adams, who [died yesterday](#).

He had been suffering from [prostate cancer](#) for some time. During the moment, last year, when President Joe Biden’s [possible prostate cancer diagnosis](#) became a matter of public discussion, Mr. Adams informed us that he, too, had been diagnosed with that form of cancer, and that he had not long to live.

Like most newspaper readers, I knew of Adams from his Dilbert comic strip. I missed his career in writing books, in

the aughts and early teens. But I caught up with the man when he [predicted](#), in 2015, that Donald Trump possessed a “talent stack” that would likely lead to winning the presidency—an insightful judgment—that may have helped the prophesied event to occur.

Adams became one of the more interesting podcasters, an intellectual powerhouse who urged us to reframe how we think about politics, culture, our very lives. I never became a fan, exactly, but I not only admired him, I *liked* him. He was quite a character; he was a man *of* character.

It was interesting, especially, to watch him develop in the context of our odd (transitional?) moment in history. On the late pandemic, for example, many of his early opinions and meta-opinions were misguided. But he changed his mind, as many of us have. And though, as I mentioned above, his most famous assertion was that, in matters of persuasion, “the facts don’t matter,” he was persuaded to change opinions when he learned more.

So [may we all](#).

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.